

Party Revenge:

OR,

Mr. William Clarke's

NARRATIVE

OF HIS

Case and Sufferings,

for Defending the Doctrine of the Ever-
Blessed TRINITY, in a late Discourse, en-
titled *PLAIN DEALING*.

To which is added,

His Letter to one of the Non-subscribing Mini-
sters for Misrepresenting his Character.

ALSO,

A Seasonable Caution to his Fellow Collegian,
that Indefatigable Busy-body near *K-t-Street*.

With an Account of the Prosecution and
Indictment of *E. CURL*, Bookseller, at
the *Old Bailey*, for printing a scandalous
Libel against the aforementioned *Mr. Clark*.

They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they
have laid him. John xx. 13.
Lord, who shall abide in thy Tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy
Holy Hill? - He that backbiteth not with his Tongue, nor
doth Evil to his Neighbour, nor taketh up a Reproach against
his Neighbour, Psal. xvi. 1, 3.

LONDON: Printed, and Sold by *A. Woodcock*,
at the first House in *Ship-Court*, in the *Old-
Bailey*, near *Ludgate-Hill*, and by the Booksellers
of *London* and *Westminster*. 1720. Price Six-pence.

Я О

102

1





th
C
th
gr
pl
fe
u
v
H
w
a
d
C
n
a
g
v
M
J

Courteous Reader,

 T HE Late unhappy Divisions among
 the *Dissenting Ministers*, occasion'd
 by the ill Conduct of several who
 refus'd to subscribe to the *Decla-*

ration of the Blessed Trinity, and
 that at such a Time when the Churches of
 Christ were beyond Measure perplex'd with
 the *Anti-trinitarian* Notion ; this making so
 great a Noise in the World that many *Pam-*
phlets were thereupon Printed on both Sides,
 several of which I carefully read, and finding
 upon the whole the *Non-subscribing Party* so
 very indefatigable to pave a Way for the *Arian*
Herésie (which they dress'd up and disguis'd
 with the *plausible Appearances of Truth*,
 and by the vilest Prevarications labour'd to
 deceive and impose upon the Ignorant and
 Credulous) this being as I perceiv'd their per-
 nicious Design, it so mov'd my Zeal, that I
 drew my Pen in the Behalf, of my robb'd (yet
 glorious) Redeemer.

The Performance I sent forth into the
 World under this Title, *Plain Dealing, or a*
Friendly Reproof to the Reverend Mr. Wil-
liam Bush and Mr. David Jennings, both Dis-
 A 2 *senting*

senting Ministers near Wapping, for refusing to subscribe the Declaration for the ever blessed Trinity, &c. and tho' I particularly address'd my self to these *Two Gentlemen*, yet (as I have already shewn the World) there are many more who have involv'd themselves in the *same Guilt*, for by their Rhetorical florid Speeches, and Sophistical Quibbles they have so fill'd the World with such Controversies, such damnable and impious Doctrines and Heresies (tho' mingled with some Truths, the better to countenance their Errors) that it even fills many with Scruples about the *Principles of Religion*, that they begin to question where, and among whom they may expect Salvation.

In that Piece I treated 'em with all the good Manners of a *Christian* and a *Gentleman*. I spoke nothing of their Characters but what was honourable; for I look upon it to be a most execrable Practice, and what ought to be exploded by all good Men when any shall *digress* from the Argument in hand to Personal Reflections, odious Sarcasms conjur'd up on purpose to blacken the Character of an Opponent: But tho' I durst not have Recourse to *Scandal* nor make use of *Villainous Innuendo's*, yet I thought it my Duty to detect and expose the artful and dangerous Sophistry of these *unhappy Gentlemen*, not only to expel the Poison which some have already imbib'd, but by way of *Antidote* to prevent the Infection of others. What I

wrote

Party Revenge.

5

wrote was with *heartly good Will and Sincerity of Intention*, tho' I must own with a Capacity much below the Merit of the Cause.

I do assure you, that I had no *Personal Quarrel* with either of these Two, nor do I so much as know their Faces if I see 'em. But these being the only Persons round about us that had refus'd to subscribe the Declaration for the *Trinity*, and finding this Contagion began to spread it self among us, I look'd upon my self oblig'd to *warn my People* of their Danger, which is ever the greater when Men from among our own selves shall be guilty of broaching such *false and Heretical Doctrines*, and that perhaps only from an *Itch* of being singular and popular. And whereas I am reflected upon for not subscribing my Name to the aforesaid *Pamphlet*, it was for these Reasons that I did it not.

First, To avoid the Persecution of Reproach and Slander; which I thought I might lawfully do, since the Dispute was not about *Personal Immoralities*, but general Principles, and which by themselves were to the World made so very notorious.

My *Second Reason* was, that the *Truth it self might not suffer* from the Meanness or Contempt of the Author, as sometimes it doth where People are prejudic'd by the malicious Tongues of some *Ecclesiasticks*, of which I am of late made too sensible. The *Epistle to the Hebrews*, is generally thought to

to be the Apostle *Paul's*, and yet it is *without a Name*, which was not because he wrote any Thing unwarrantable therein; but (as 'tis believ'd) because he was made sensible that his Person and Name was hated at *Jerusalem*, and that he was grown into Contempt among the Enemies of the Gospel, and therefore lest any should be prejudic'd against the Truth, he gives Place, and wou'd not excite their Rage by adding his Name, being willing they should entertain the Truth for its *own Sake*, which otherwise might suffer for his.

For these Reasons I forbore to add my *Name*; but notwithstanding all this, I have not been able to escape the *Persecution of the Tongue*, for old Stories have been trump't up, and very industriously improv'd by adding thereto my *Family Difference*, and the scandalous Accounts of some *perjur'd Testators*; and the Emissaries employ'd have spread 'em with the greatest Aggravations; Some have *gone from House to House*, and by their black Art have prejudic'd many in these Parts against me. Others have been encourag'd with the *greatest Scurrility* to insult me in the open Streets, and upon the Publication of the foresaid Pamphlet my *Meeting-House* was padlock'd up, and upon taking Possession, there were two or three impudent Fellows got into the Pulpit, and there drank a *Health to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*

Ghost (a), and all this (as it seems) in Opposition to the Doctrine of the *Trinity* that I had so lately appear'd for, tho' who were the Promoters of that impious Action, I durst not say.

It is evident to a Demonstration, that the Populace are sufficiently furnish'd with *Slander*, and that by the vile Insinuations of some prevaricating Sycophants; tho' did but Men generally understand how to distinguish between *Reports* and *Certainties*, this *Stratagem* wou'd be as unsuccessful as it is *disingenuous*; but for Want of this the *poor Drudges* their Creatures, in order to render me odious, have in the spreading the most palpable and notorious Lyes and Calumnies, shew'd such Fury and malicious Bitterness as cou'd only be the Result of Men void of all Shame, Religion, or Common Humanity. Thus have *I heard the defaming of many, Fear on every side; Report, say they, and we will report it: All my Familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our Revenge on him* (b).

This was the Expedient the *Pagans* us'd against the Christians in Primitive Times,

(a) *This Story I find was printed some Months ago in a late Paper call'd The Medley, by one Francis Clifton, a profess'd Papist in the Old-Bailey, Numb. VI. and that with such Aggravation and Reflections that I think not fit at this Time to make mention of.*

(b) *Jer. xx. 10.*

first to dress 'em up like Monsters in the Skins of Beasts, and then by Dogs worry 'em to Death : And the same Methods are still us'd by Men of *Heretical Principles*, tho' much more refin'd and improv'd, and Religion hath suffer'd infinitely more, since this *Stratagem* has been us'd by one Professor and Minister against another, so that there is too much reason to fear that such have nothing more at Heart *than the Advantage of their own Cause*.

Now the Principles which engage Men upon such ill Arts and scandalous Practices as these are, we shall find to be as follow.

I. The Pride of some *Ecclesiasticks* who love to *shine alone*, and therefore like Artists, they endeavour to extract a Good Name out of the Ruin of another. This is to be *MAD* indeed, ' and there is no Difference between ' the *proud Man* and the *Mad Man* unless it ' be in this, we pity him that's *mad*, we ' hate him that's *proud*, and so doth God ' too (a). Pride is a most prolifick Vice, and (as one saith) there are very few Sins to which it is not either *Mother* or *Nurse*. And of this the Church in all Ages, hath had many costly Experiments ; for if we trace the Catalogues of all the Heresies from *Simon Magus's* Days down to this present Time, we shall find *Pride a principal Actor* in every

(a) Parr on the Romans.

Scene. With these there is nothing so sacred but upon Occasion, they can prostitute to their Lusts ; therefore when *Diotrephes* seeks the Preheminence, he can prate against an Apostle himself (a) ; and even the Divinity of Christ shall be trampled upon when *Arius* wants a Footstool to climb up to his affected Greatness. No Wonder then, if we hear the proud *Pharisee* say, *I am not as this Publican.*

2. *Self-Interest.* This is the Great Idol to which the World bows, and gives not only the Knee, but the Heart also ; and if we observe, we shall find that it hath a considerable Influence, not only in *Secular*, but Religious Affairs. In the Old Testament Time we find, that ‘ there were *mercenary* Prophets ‘ that turn’d their *Office* into a *Trade*, they ‘ Divin’d for *Money*, nay, sometimes for ‘ *Handfuls of Barley and Pieces of Bread* ; and ‘ in the New we find the same Charge ‘ brought in, by way of Prediction against a ‘ Set of Teachers, who thro’ *Covetousness* ‘ should with feigned Words make Merchandise of you (b) ; who are those ? the Apostle tells you, *who privily shall bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them.* An Epidemick Disease ! and what, I fear, will hardly be eradicated out of the Church. If therefore any durst be so

(a) 3 John ix. 10. (b) 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2, 3.

bold as to touch upon this tender Part, he is sure to fall under the keenest Resentments, and that without Quarter.

When *Paul* began to discover the Wheedle at *Ephesus*, he had soon the whole Town about his Ears, for *Demetrius* and his Craftsmen were too sensible that if the Apostle and his Doctrine met with Acceptance there, their Interest was entirely gone, and therefore that cunning Sophister makes a very subtil Oration in the Behalf of the Goddess *Diana* : O Great is the Goddess *Diana* ! But not one Word of his own Gain then ; which indeed was the Source and Spring of all that Noise and Uproar. ‘ O ! wou’d to God that this
 ‘ Way of Traffick were at an End, that our
 ‘ *Spiritual Merchants* might no longer impose
 ‘ upon their credulous Chapmen ;’ for while Religion is thus prostituted to a base Lust, we can never hope for Peace in this our *Israel*. And,

3. Desire of *Revenge*. This is such a Disease that will certainly break out and shew it self, and that after a most formidable Manner. ‘ When Men are in Heat and Passion, they do not consider what is true, but
 ‘ what is spiteful and mischievous ; and speak
 ‘ evil of others in Revenge of some Injury
 ‘ which they have received from them : And
 ‘ when they are blinded with their Passion,
 ‘ they lay about them *madly*, and at a Venture, not so much caring whether the Evil
 ‘ they speak be true or not. Nay, many are
 ‘ so

Party Revenge.

11

‘ so *Devilish* as to invent and raise false Reports on purpose to blast Men’s Reputations ;
‘ this is a *Diabolical* Temper, and therefore
‘ St. James tells us, that the slanderous *Tongue*
‘ is set on Fire of Hell. And the Devil hath
‘ his very Name from *Calumny* and false Accusation, and it is his Nature too, for he is
‘ always ready to stir up and foment this evil
‘ Spirit among ’em (a).

Some Men think their own Security depends on their revenging themselves upon the Names and Estates of their Neighbours, and by driving ’em out from the Heritage of the Lord, like those *False Brethren* we read of, who cast out the Godly from a Principle of Hatred, and that because of their Loyalty to their God, and yet these said, *Let the Lord be glorified* (b). That must needs be most Devilish when Men shall revenge themselves under the Pretence of glorifying God ; such *speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him* (c).

Historians say of *Themistocles*, that he always thwarted the Counsels of *Aristides*, not that he thought it the Interest of the *Commonwealth*, but his own, to keep down the growing Reputation of his Competitor, or perhaps to revenge some private Grudge. And (saith one) I fear that envious Artifice has been too often made use of, as well in *Eccle-*

(a) Dr. Tillotson, on Evil Speaking.

(b) Isa. lxvi. 5.

(c) Job xiii. 7.

fiastick as in Civil Affairs. *Piques* and Displeasures are hardly, if ever forgiven; and therefore a malicious Mind is in continual Vexation while the Prosperity of his Adversary lasts. And what else shall I call it, when *Men*, yea *Ministers* shall furnish their People with Reports, and then give Encouragement to spread 'em, and that against a Man that hath given no other Provocations than being a little too close in the Vindication of his Injur'd Lord. Is not this Revenge? O my Soul, come not thou into their Secret, unto their Assembly, mine Honour, be not thou united; for in their Anger they slew a Man, and in their Self-will they digged down a Wall (a).

These are the strong Springs which fills the Tongue with *so much Malignity*, and by which 'tis kept in continual Motion. ' But
 ' how (saith one) can it but move, or how
 ' can it regularly move that is impelled by
 ' such various and vicious Principles (b).
 ' All the ill Humours are gathered to it, and
 ' therefore the Tongue is full of deadly Poy-
 ' son (c). And the more poysonous, deadly
 and Devilish, when CLOAK'D with the
 greatest Pretensions to Religion, and that per-
 haps with a Design to expose a Man to Con-
 tempt and Ruin of which I am sufficiently
 sensible.

(a) Gen. xlix. 6.

(b) Well upon the Government of the Tongue.

(c) James iii. 8.

Certainly, it must be unjust and ungenerous for any, but more especially for *Ministers* to revive and keep alive former Reports, not only to the *Scandal of Religion* in general, but to the great Grief of him that's wounded. For supposing me to be what I am by some Men represented, am I not then *an Object of Pity*, and do I not deserve the Prayers of good Men, and not such unmerciful Stripes, which rather threaten Ruin and Destruction than my *Restoration*? Surely a more tender Hand is requir'd to set a *Disjoynted Member* into Place again. Besides, such bitter Expressions (which are not only the Result of *Ill Manners*, but *Ill Religion*,) have most dismal Consequences attending 'em, it being the most effectual way to *Shock*, if not overthrow the Faith of many. How like a *Dagger* to the Soul of a good Man must it be, when he shall hear upon these Black Representations some weak and unsettled Professors begin to call *Religion it self into Question*? It surely argues too great a Distemper of Mind, or there wou'd be more regard to the Glory of God, the Honour of Religion, and the Good of those many poor Souls that by this means are like to be turn'd up by the Root. And I had verily thought, with Submission to better Judgments, that in our dealing with an Offender, (for some Men I perceive are never to be otherwise,) these Rules were always to be observ'd.

First, That the Party be *duly admonish'd*, and that in such a manner that he may be convinc'd

vinc'd that it is not with a Design to disgrace nor insult him, but purely for his *Spiritual Good* and Advantage.

Secondly, In case the Admonish'd be refractory, then, that the Report be made to Persons of Discretion, such as are most likely to redress the Fault, and not to every Body, lest the Cause of Christ suffer more by the Reporter than the Offender.

Thirdly, That nothing but the Amendment of the Offender be intended, *Not his Ruin*, or to carry on a base Design ; No, but his Restoration and Salvation. ——— And

Fourthly, That we mourn before God, and pray for his *Conversion*. I wish in these things we had not fail'd, and I should have been thankful to any *Gentleman* for his Admonitions, Prayers and Tears, but instead of this, I have been us'd as tho' I were not of *Human Race*, however the Lord hath turn'd it to my Good, tho' no thanks to some for their Conduct : For their Blows have not only been hard and heavy, but repeated with that Rage and Fury, that my Life became a constant Scene of Sorrows, *I looked on my right Hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me ; Refuge failed me, no man cared for my Soul (a), then I said I am cut off (b) i. e.* utterly undone. But God made use of their opprobrious Reproaches and contumelious Disgraces to bring about his own *Gracious Pur-*

(a) *Psal.* 142. 4. (b) *Lam.* iii. 54.

pose, to wit, to the Salvation of a *poor Sinner*. By these Things the Lord brought me to my Knees, and made me kiss the Rod, and say, *Good is the Lord*, which I once as little expected, as mine Enemies ever intended. They *thought Evil against me*, but God meant it to my Good (a). They miss'd the Mark, but God hath hit it, for they aim'd at my *Person*, God at my *Sin*, and I trust that That Grace that hath been at so much Pains to do so poor and mean a Creature so much Good, will carry on his Work unto the Day of the Lord.

If therefore I have been formerly so unhappy as to Sin against my GOD, He hath to the Praise of his Glorious Grace open'd my Eyes on *this Side the Place of deserv'd Eternal Torments*; he hath amazingly awaken'd and sorely humbled me, and I trust hath also given me Repentance; he hath made me know my self that never did before, and that I am a *poor Worm*, that daily stand in need of the Righteousness of Christ to cover my foulest Spots. 'Tis I trust in this Righteousness that I stand justified and pardon'd before God, tho' I know that I shall meet with none among some Men.

And I do also further declare, as in the Presence of God, and that to his Glory, and (if it may be) to the Satisfaction of the

(a) Gen. 1. 20.

Saints, that I am by Grace kept from the Commission of any gross or scandalous Evils whatever, and that I wou'd, (being thereunto dispos'd by Divine Grace,) *rather choose to be as miserable in this Life as my Enemies cou'd wish me*, than to be given up by God to the Commission of any one Sin, for I look upon it to be the sorest Judgment that can befall a Man on this Side Hell, to be given up to the Lust of his own Heart.

And farther give me leave, to say, that I have now Preach'd near these ten *Years* to this People, among whom I live, and who is he that can say that I ever haunted *Ale-Houses or Taverns*, or once play'd at any Game, or ever saw me in Drink or so much as greedy of it (*a*)? Did ever any see me abroad at unseasonable hours (*b*)? or in the Company of a *Lewd Woman*? or hath it been my Custom to be in the Company of any Woman by her self, tho' never so sober, either in the Streets or Fields? I have and do refuse it upon any Account, whether *Civil or Religious*, yea tho' they have been *Messengers sent from the Sick*. At whose Table have I been troublesome? who have I defrauded? or whose debt have I yet run into, altho' I have nothing near the *Maintainance* that the meanest of my Brethren in these Parts

(a) Nor was Mr. Clark ever once drunk in his whole Life.

(b) A Thing easily discern'd if Ministers are not disguis'd in the Habit of a Layman, a Practice much us'd by some, for Reasons best known to themselves.

have? or who is he that in the Common Course of my Conversation (for Men can Judge no further) hath ever observ'd either by my Gestures, Behaviour, or Speeches, *a loose and wicked Disposition*, or any thing unbecoming a Sober Person? I Challenge even the most inveterate *Arian* in the World to prove the contrary. Not that I speak this by *way of boasting*, no, but out of necessity, and that with fear and trembling, because I am made to know, that I only stand while I am held fast by that mighty Hand.

And yet *old Stories* are still to be cherish'd, and kept alive, that they may, if possible (as they have gotten me underfoot) keep me from rising any more; for some *Gentlemen, like Women and Cowards never give Quarter*: But that which is still more shocking, and what can hardly be born with an equal Mind, is to see these Men pretend to *particular Accounts*, (about which they are altogether in the dark) and then wickedly increase the Sum, of which I have been more than sufficiently appriz'd, as will appear by this following Letter which I sent to one of the *Non-subscribing Gentlemen* in the Ministry, upon the Abuses I receiv'd for my printing the fore-mention'd Pamphlet intitled *Plain Dealing, &c.*

To the Reverend Mr. _____

S I R,

July 28. 1719.

“ I Perceive that for my *Plain Dealing*, or
 “ *Friendly Reproof*, I am like to meet with
 “ some very sower Responses from you, who
 “ (as I am inform’d,) are very indefatigable
 “ to rake into old Sores, and rumage every
 “ Quarter for Scandal, that you may together
 “ with your own Slanders, (tho’ as false as
 “ they are malicious,) dress me up, and then
 “ expose me as a *Monster* to the Populace.
 “ But this is the old way to throw dirt when
 “ Truth is too hard for us, tho’ it deserves to
 “ be exploded as an Artifice too mean and
 “ much below the Character of a Christian
 “ and a Minister. It is said of the Workers
 “ of Iniquity, that *they search out Iniquities,*
 “ *they accomplish a diligent Search,* and an
 “ *ungodly man diggeth up Evil, and in his*
 “ *Lips there is as a burning Fire*; If he can
 “ find nothing above Ground, (saith one) he
 “ will dig something up, tho’ it be what both
 “ by *God and Man* hath been buried long
 “ since. This is my Case; But, Sir, tho’ I
 “ am conscious to my self of some *False Steps*
 “ that I have formerly taken, yet I am amaz’d,
 “ that you can dare thus at Random to en-
 “ crease the Score, and that after *so foul and*
 “ *black a manner*, the which I challenge you
 “ and the World to make good if you can.
 “ Give me leave therefore to say, that (what-
 “ eve

“ ever my Mistakes have formerly been, and
 “ however magnified and expos’d by Men of
 “ self-designing Principles,) I can now thro’
 “ Grace, (tho’ with trembling) make my
 “ Appeal to God, as touching my Conversa-
 “ tion, and that I had rather be without Life
 “ than live without him. The Lord knows
 “ the way that I take, and the Searcher of
 “ all Hearts, he knows that I do not live in
 “ any known Sin ; and I challenge even you
 “ and the worst Enemy I have in the World,
 “ to prove the contrary, tho’ now maliciously
 “ revil’d and upbraided.

“ *But what’s all this to the Matter in hand ?*
 “ I have been PLAIN with you about your
 “ Principles, and you presently charge my
 “ Morals ; *A poor Subterfuge !* when instead
 “ of answering the Matter in debate, you
 “ very Un-christian and Un-gentleman-like
 “ fall foul on my *Person and Character*, tho’
 “ by the way, I am prone to think, that I
 “ shou’d find it no hard Task to prove, that
 “ *An Error in Principle is worse than an Error*
 “ *in Practice ;* But that’s not now my Busi-
 “ ness : This I say, I medled not with your
 “ *Character*, but your *Principles* only ; and I
 “ am very well assur’d that an *Honourable*
 “ *Antagonist* wou’d have observ’d the like
 “ Rules of good Manners again. But this
 “ way of answering, I perceive is too com-
 “ mon with Gentlemen of your Size, who
 “ make Slander a Piece of *Ecclesiastical* as well
 “ as *State policy*. The old Maxim will hard-

" ly ever be forgotten, *To calumniate stoutly,*
 " *for that, how perfectly soever the Wound of*
 " *Reproach be heal'd, there will remain a*
 " *Scar, and tho' we wipe away with never so*
 " *much Care the Dirt thrown at us, there will*
 " *be left some Sulliage behind.* O Calumny !
 " great is the Usefulness of Calumny ! But
 " good Sir, have you no other Arguments to
 " silence me withal, but the *murdering my*
 " *Reputation !* am I only to be answer'd with
 " this Kind of Persecution ? is this like a *Fair*
 " *Adversary, a Gentleman, a Minister, a Chri-*
 " *stian, a Scholar ?* let the World judge.
 " What Quarter must I expect if some Gen-
 " tlemen might but dispute by the Goal and
 " the Hangman ? I fear but little. It is Sto-
 " ried of *Tiberius* that such was his Cruelty,
 " who because it was against Law to put Vir-
 " gins to Death, he would oftentimes cause the
 " Hangman to ravish 'em, and then to execute
 " 'em. This is too much the Spirit of *some*
 " *Men in our Day,* who because they can do
 " no hurt to their Neighbours without first
 " offering *Violence to their Names,* will not
 " fail at any rate to defile 'em, that they may
 " fall as an easy Prey into the Hands of a
 " merciless Enemy. Get but the Name under-
 " foot, and then we shall do well enough
 " with the Man and the Cause too.

" It is evident to a Demonstration, that the
 " Noise and Clamour among the Laity, at this
 " Day is too much owing to the carnal Arti-
 " fices of some *Ecclesiasticks,* who to aggran-
 " dize

“dize themselves will not scruple to set their
 “Feet upon the Neck of a *Brother's Reputation*. This is the Source and Spring of our
 “Disorders! have we a Man to get under
 “foot? Then let us *blacken him* as much as
 “we can; let but Reports be rais'd, fomented
 “and spread; whether true or false it matters
 “not, some will stick; *report say they and we*
 “*will report it*. Let's but be able to say in
 “the Presence of an *Officious Tool*, we have
 “heard the Man's M A D, and that mad Re-
 “port will presently *circulate*, or that we
 “have receiv'd Letters, in which we are
 “told of some ill things done many Years
 “ago, or that we are well acquainted with
 “Persons of known Reputation, who have
 “been more immediately concern'd with him,
 “and that live upon the very Spot, these give
 “*A very particular and black Account*. Let
 “but this be boldly asserted, the Affections
 “of the People will soon be weakned to-
 “wards him; if we can meet with any *Scoun-*
 “*drel* (so he or she be but a Church-Member)
 “who hath Boldness enough to encounter
 “him, or that can dare to make, gather, or
 “aggravate Reports till his Reputation be
 “funk in the Opinion of his People, we shall
 “*soon break him*; and if our Creatures are but
 “willing to go thro' this Drudgery, we'll
 “find out ways to encourage 'em, and if their
 “Hearts begin to fail, we know how to com-
 “fort 'em; this must be done, or we can ne-
 “ver obtain our Ends.

“SIR,

“ S I R, This is too much my Case ; I
 “ have, it seems, been too *P L A I N* in the
 “ Defence of the Doctrine of the *Blessed*
 “ *Trinity*, and therefore there must be a Run
 “ made upon my Reputation, and the *Scheme*
 “ is so well concerted, that nothing is want-
 “ ing to make me odious, that Malice it
 “ self is capable of inventing. We are told,
 “ that there are *Anti-trinitarian Cabals*, who
 “ set upon the Reputation of all those that
 “ Preach up the *Deity* of our Glorious Sa-
 “ viour, as if they were the Grand Com-
 “ mittee of Characters ; one of which we
 “ have very near at hand in the Dwelling
 “ of one of your *Pew-keepers*, who (as she
 “ saith) hath already address’d you for Pro-
 “ tection, or that she might be kept harmless.
 “ In this *Club* there are of divers Perswasions of
 “ *both Sexes* who set upon my Character. They
 “ are furnish’d (as they give out) *with Reports*
 “ *from you*, which they aggravate and spread,
 “ and that oftentimes as they are in Parcels in
 “ the open Street, with that Scurrility, that
 “ even our *Adversaries themselves* cry *Shame*
 “ *on’t*. To hear ’em Talk, one wou’d think
 “ himself among *Fail Birds*, or rather *Furies*
 “ of the Infernal Pit, and not Men making
 “ a Profession of Religion. But who may I
 “ thank for this but your self Sir, and some
 “ others in the Ministry, who (tho’ com-
 “ plain’d to) are not in the least mov’d, or
 “ concern’d for these *Indecencies*. Nay, are
 “ not these vile Persons rather smil’d on,
 “ com-

“ commended, joyn’d with and embrac’d ?
 “ Are You not pleas’d with the *Bitterness*
 “ and *Boldness* of their daring Expressions ?
 “ And that because they are against a Man
 “ that talks a little too *PLAIN* with you
 “ about the *Doctrine of the Trinity*.

“ *SIR*, I had almost forgot to let you
 “ know, that it is reported that you had
 “ a *Hand* in the *Turning me out of my Meet-*
 “ *ing-House*; and I must needs say, that it
 “ look’d very strange that it should be taken
 “ over my Head at such a Time as this, and
 “ that after taking Possession, there shou’d
 “ be two or three impudent Fellows upon
 “ the 2d of *July* got into the Pulpit, and
 “ there drank a *Health to the Father, Son,*
 “ *and Holy Ghost*, in Opposition to the Do-
 “ ctine of the Trinity which I had so lately
 “ vindicated; yet with this I charge you not,
 “ but with having too great a hand in my
 “ Reproaches. I am loth to make *Reprisals*,
 “ and therefore I hope there will be no fur-
 “ ther Provocation: But if I am still at this
 “ Rate to be baited, I presume no Man will
 “ blame me, if I do my self Justice, and ac-
 “ quaint the World with the *barbarous Treat-*
 “ *ment* that I have met with from so ungene-
 “ rous an Adversary. In the mean Time, I
 “ am *SIR*, your Friend and Servant,

WILLIAM CLARKE.

It is also too notorious, that it hath been
 the Practice of that *Wise Man of Goatham*,
 near

near *K-t-street*, to divert himself and his Company by *playing very often upon the same String*; but I can hardly perswade my self, that That Reverend *SPARK* is at all appriz'd of my being let into the Secret between him and Mrs. *Hannah* ———, upon whose Account he had *a Cup the less*; for surely, if he were, he wou'd hardly thus provoke me, lest it shou'd prove so strong an *Emetick*, that I shou'd Out with all. However, lest Mr. *Examiner* should think this Hint a meer Surmise, I further declare that the foresaid *Woman* was at my Dwelling, where she gave an Account of the whole *INTRIGUE*. So that if he doth not immediately retract and acknowledge his Fault, he must thank himself if any Thing more be heard of this Matter.

And as for some Gentlemen of the Bottle, who tho' Men of a *Liberal Conversation*, yet in their Reckonings they are so very disagreeable, that I fear I must be oblig'd, whether I will or no, to balance the Account with 'em, and if I shou'd happen to be a little too open, it is not without Provocation.

Who sees not but he that is wilfully blind, that *Heresie is full of Cruelty*, and I was going to say, that the Sting of a Scorpion is not more fatal, more incurable, and more venomous, than the Tongue of an enraged *Arian*. But suppose I were to write after their Co-

py (for I could make *such Reprisals* as might cause the Ears of him that reads to *tingle*) and expose the Sins and gross Enormities of some *Gentlemen in the Ministry*, 'or if I shou'd 'rake back into the Ashes of their *unregenerate State* and Condition, keep *Almanacks* 'for the Years and Days of their Failings, watch for their haltings, tell all the Stories I have heard of 'em, or, what I *personally know*, at this Rate we should (I fear) not find an *honest man in the Ministry*. But this is altogether an *unpleasing Theme* to me, who wou'd rather *cover with a Mantle* the Nakedness of my Brethren, than expose 'em to the Scorn and Contempt of others. Yet I think it not amiss at this Time (in Order to correct that *fond Opinion* that some busy Censurers have of themselves) to ask these subsequent Questions.

First, Whether we have not all of us the *same Nature, i. e.* alike defil'd, deprav'd and corrupted? If so, *Who maketh thee to differ (a)?*

Secondly, Whether this corrupt Nature in thee, hath not at one Time or another discover'd it self, or broke forth into the same Act of Sin, or something as bad, if not worse than that with which thou chargest thy Brother? If so, *thou art inexcusable, O Man, whosoever thou art, that Judgest, for wherein thou Judgest another, thou condemnest thy*

(a) 1 Cor. iv. 7.

self, for thou that Judgest, doest the same Things (a).

Thirdly, But supposing thou art yet in none of those Things guilty, with which thou chargest thy Brother, yet I again ask, whether thou art sure thou shalt never be overcome? or that thou art not liable to fall into the same Temptation the very next Hour? Then be not high-minded, but fear (b).

One would think these Things consider'd, were enough to silence the most restless and incessant Tongues among us. But alas, this is for Want of being more acquainted with our selves. Were we but more at home; did we but see more the Plague of our own Hearts, we shou'd find much more cause to judge and abhor our selves, and be more compassionate to others.

It is storied of Cardinal *Cremensis*, who came hither as Pope *Honorius* the Second's Legate, how he upon a certain Day in Convocation exclaim'd most bitterly against the *Marriage of Ministers*, shewing that such were thereby defil'd, and speaking highly in the Praise of a single Life, and yet *that very Night* he was himself taken in the very Act of Adultery (c).

It is worth our Consideration (saith one) the great Difference there is between the Judgment Men pass upon themselves, and

(a) Rom. ii. 1. (b) xi. 20. (c) Baker's Chronicle.

other Men. As for themselves, all their Errors are but small Mistakes, and all their Sins against God, however attended with ugly Circumstances of Light, of Consent, of Will, Custom and Allowance, yet they are but Sins of Infirmary if themselves may be Judges in their own Cause: Their Injuries to Men are but small and trivial Offences; and they do indeed expect both from God and Man a Pardon of course, which if they have not, they judge God to be harsh and severe, Man to be cruel and implacable: But when they come to pass Judgment upon other Men, the *Tables are turn'd*; some Mistakes are damnable Delusions, and all their Sins against God, which they can observe, are Evidences of a naughty Heart, and inconsistent with Grace, and the Offences of others against them, are inexcusable and intollerable, great Affronts and Indignities; whereas, on the contrary, thou shouldst, as it was said of a Great Man, *be severe to thy self, and candid to others*; because thou knowest more Wickedness by thy self, and more Aggravations of thine own Sin, than of all the Sins that are in the World, but at least all the Reason and Justice in the World requires this, that thou shouldest weigh thy self and others in the same Ballance, that thou shouldest Try thy own and their Actions by the same Touchstone, and more need not be done (a). Were

(a) Poole on Detraction.

but these Rules observ'd, there would be no Need of *Priestcraft*, nor the cunning little Methods and Arts that are us'd to undermine, to supplant, to ruin and destroy another, to sink the Reputation of one, and set up another. *Charity*, saith the Apostle, *thinketh no Evil, rejoyceth not in Iniquity* (a), i. e. imputeth not Evil, or thinketh of no Revenge, or plotteth no Mischief in his Heart against another. It takes no Pleasure in speaking Evil, or in spreading scandalous Reports of others, but rather grieves when any Evil befalls his Brother. *Charity* seeks its Brother's Good, endeavours to support his Credit, and cover his Failures; for *Charity shall cover the Multitude of Sin* (b). But let a Man's Parts, Abilities, Profession and Services be what they will, yea tho' he suffer and lay down his very Life for God, yet if *Charity* be wanting, it profits him nothing (c); and as *Detraction* and *Slander* is a Sin against the Law of *Charity*; so it is against thy Brother, and it is much more so when him whom thou reproachest is a *Minister* of the Gospel: Such suffer three ways.

First, They suffer in their *Names*, and in nothing here below can a Man be more sensibly touch'd. Reproachful Words are Wounds, and such as no Physician can heal, and therefore the more afflicting. He that deprives a

(a) 1 Cor. xiii. 5, 6. (b) 1 Pet. iv. 8, Prov. x. 12.
 (c) 1 Cor. xiii. 3.

Man of his good Name is guilty of one of the worst of Robberies, because it is a Damage hardly to be repair'd, and what is to a Man dearer than Life. If thou robbest him of his Friends, or his Estate, yet these are Losses that may be recover'd again, but when a Man's Reputation's lost, 'tis hardly, if ever, restor'd again. Therefore (saith Poole) the Slanderer is more Criminal than he that dyeth by the Hands of Justice, for taking away another Man's Goods. Thou robbest him (saith he) of that which thou art not able to give him, thou robbest him of the most lasting Good which he hath, and that which alone will abide after Death, so that thy Cruelty extends beyond the Grave, and tends to this, to make his Name rot above ground while his Body rots in it. ' This is certainly a great Injury, ' for as (one saith) if the Evil which we say ' of them be not true, it is an Injury beyond ' Imagination, and beyond all possible Reparation. And tho' we should do our utmost ' Endeavour afterwards towards their Vindication, yet that makes but very little amends, ' because their Vindication seldom reaches so ' far as their Reproach, and because commonly Men are neither so forward to spread ' the Vindication, nor is it so easily receiv'd ' after ill Impressions are once made. And ' put the Case at the best, that the Matter ' of Slander is true, yet no Man's Reputation is considerably stain'd, tho' never so deservedly, without great Harm and Damage ' to

to him. And it is great Odds but the Matter by passing thro' several hands is aggravated beyond Truth, every one out of his Bounty being apt to add something to it (a); and this not only affects a Man for the present, but entails a Blot and an Odium upon his Posterity afterwards.

Secondly, By Detraction, a Minister suffers in his Temporal Estate or Worldly Concerns. *Strip a Man of his good Name*, and it is the ready way to send him and his Family a begging. Do but once weaken the Affections of his People by destroying his Reputation, and he's presently expos'd to a *poor and miserable Life*, besides a numerous Train of Temptations attending it. Can we make a Jest of so serious a Matter (saith Dr. Tillotson) of an Injury so very hard to be repented of as it ought, because in such a Case no Repentance will be acceptable without Restitution, if it be in our Power, and perhaps it will undo us in this World to make it, and if we do it not, it will be our Ruin in the other.

Thirdly, By this a Minister suffers in his Office; he is like to do little or no Good. If once he hath lost his Reputation, all his Endeavours are despis'd and disregarded. Therefore (as Poole saith) their Fame is most necessary for their Usefulness in the Word. And when a Man defames a Minister, besides that

(a) Dr. Tillotson on Evil-Speaking.

Injury which is common to other Men, he doth this particular Mischief, he endeavours to rob the World of all the Good which such a Person may do in it. Such are in *Confederacy with the Devil*, to put a Stop, if possible, to the Work of the Kingdom. The Gospel is the only thing he hates, and therefore he is the most indefatigable to hinder its Progress, and in nothing more you can oblige that vile Spirit than to fall in with his Measures, and carry on his black Design. O how like a Thunder-bolt will this fall upon thy Head one Day, when the Blood of those Souls shall be charg'd upon thee, who might have been convinc'd and converted, but were hinder'd by thy Means; or that thou hast been the unhappy Instrument to dry up the Tears, and stifle the Convictions, and promising Inclinations of any, by reproaching the Ministers of Christ. This is the highest Act of Cruelty, that Men can possibly be guilty of when they are resolv'd upon a Game, tho' to the Cost of another Man's Soul.

Now, who are they who are the principal Aggressors in this *dirty Work*? They are not so much the profess'd Enemies to Religion, or the vile Debauchees of the Age: They are not the black Tribe that openly declare themselves for Hell: If it were only these, we should not so much Wonder; for we expect nothing more from 'em: No, no; the Disease (as one saith) doth not rest here, the *Plague* is among our selves; they are *Professors*, our
Mo-

Mother's Children who have waged War, and drawn the Sword, and their Wounds are deepest. These are *my Reproachers*, these are they who have added Affliction to the Afflicted, and none but the Searcher of Hearts knows the cruel Strokes that I have incessantly groan'd under for near these 15 Years. Nor am I unsensible of the Predominancy of Divine Providence: These are but Instruments; there is a *secret Hand* that sets all at Work. The Lord is the chief Agent and Mover in all Actions, and hath the greatest Hand in all my Afflictions, for nothing falls out by uncertain Contingencies, but according to the good Pleasure of God; and as it is the Lord, so his Judgments are just, tho' Men are full of *Cruelty, and design nothing more than the Satisfaction of their Lusts*, yet righteous is the Lord, and righteous are his Judgments. I know that the Judgments of the Lord are right, and that in *Faithfulness he hath afflicted me*; and tho' I have drank deep of the Cup, yet I cannot but set my Seal to this, that there is no Injustice, Cruelty nor Extremity in all that God doth, for he hath punish'd me less than my Iniquities deserve; nor indeed can I tell how to call 'em Punishments, since the Rod was what I cou'd not have done without. And if it be the Pleasure of the Lord to correct and try me further, yet if while he chastens, he will but teach me out of his Law; if I may but be under the continual Influences of the Divine Spirit, and if he

he will but say, *Your Iniquities are pardon'd*; if he'll not only kill the Flesh, but the Affections and Lusts; if he teaches me to dye to my own Interest and all that's dear to me in this Life, to, live to and long for Christ more than ever; if he will but make this proud hard and froward Heart of mine more humble, more spiritual, and more easy; if he will help me to live upon his Fulness, and never let go his hand, or trust me any more alone; if he will but be my God, and give me an inward Feeling of his Love, and at last receive me into his Kingdom and Glory, then *here am I, let him do to me, as seemeth good to him*. Let God do what he will with this Flesh, as long as the Jewel is but safe. I desire to submit and not quarrel with his Providence; for he's too wise to be instructed, too powerful to be resisted, and too good to be mistrusted.

Let none think by this Complaint, that I design to irritate or provoke any angry Spirit, or to *avenge myself on my avow'd Enemies*, God forbid: I desire to love, forgive and pray for those that hate and spitefully use me; my Intent (I say) is not so to do, but rather to *Ease my own Spirit a little*, put to silence Gain-sayers; and if it may be, to move the Pity of good Men, to whose Consideration (and with which I shall conclude) I further refer to my printed Case, in which I address'd my self to a certain Gentleman in these Words.

E

: You

‘ You were pleas’d to tell me that you have had
 ‘ the Advantage of being acquainted with the
 ‘ many secret Whisperings of this Age, among
 ‘ which some Old Stories were trump’t up a-
 ‘ gainst me, and that the Emissaries employ’d to
 ‘ *blacken my Character*, have, (to my irreparable
 ‘ Damage) by their Artifice and Cunning, not
 ‘ only obtain’d Credit among many, but have
 ‘ also prevail’d with some honest and well-mean-
 ‘ ing People to conceal the Authors of their *un-*
 ‘ *accountable Wickedness* and Inhumanity.

‘ I am very well appriz’d of that violent Spirit
 ‘ that reigns among the Professors of this Age,
 ‘ who deliver themselves in such positive Terms,
 ‘ and with such unseasonable Warmth, that it
 ‘ even becomes scandalous in the Eyes of the
 ‘ opposite Party. I must needs own it my *Un-*
 ‘ *happiness to be suspected*, and it is much more so
 ‘ when many who are so forward to spread their
 ‘ Slander, are so unjust, as that they will not be
 ‘ at the Pains to try the Cause. Necessity there-
 ‘ fore obliges me to say something by way of
 ‘ Defence, since that Man must, (in the Opinion
 ‘ of all) be reduc’d to the *meanest Circumstance*,
 ‘ who is afraid to do himself Justice.

‘ And therefore, give me leave to say, that
 ‘ what these Men assert is either false or true; if
 ‘ false, then their Account will be dreadful in the
 ‘ great Day, for God will reckon for *Names as*
 ‘ *well as Blood*, and such shall assuredly be cut off,
 ‘ as the *Fornicator, Idolater, Adulterer, &c.* If true,
 ‘ why then do they not face me and prove it?
 ‘ For unless a Crime be prov’d, it is no Crime
 ‘ in the Eye of the Law, and every Man is a just
 ‘ Man, till he is Legally convicted of being other-
 ‘ wise. Slander makes no Man a Criminal, for
 ‘ if it be enough to be accus’d, who shall be found
 ‘ innocent? If therefore the Case be clear, let no
 ‘ Man

‘ Man be afraid in *naked and open Terms to charge me* ; for it is beneath the Spirit of a Man and a Christian sneakingly and behind one’s Back to talk with *Hints and Innuendoes*.

‘ If Matters are doubtful, then as Christians we ought to suspend our Censures, for Charity is so far from evil Surmisings, that it *believes and hopes the best*. It will not believe ill of others without good Grounds, and hopes well as long as there is any ; much less dare such report things at Random, to the Prejudice of their Neighbours. Without *positive and undeniable Proof*, we are not to find any Man guilty, altho’ we have heard it from many. The Word ought to be a standing Rule to all such Judges in their passing Sentence, which saith, *If it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and enquired diligently, and behold it be true and the thing certain, that such an Abomination is wrought in Israel, (a) then indeed pronounce the Sentence*. It is not enough that Things be reported, and that we have heard it ; it must be true and certain without Dispute, or the Man’s not guilty ; but instead of this, do they not wait for every Advantage, and catch at every *Shadow of a Fault* ? doth not every wandering Hear-say, or vulgar Rumour serve with such as a Ground for the most severe and irrevocable Sentence.

‘ *But be indeed that I have err’d !* (as in the Days of my Vanity I have, yea and since I am conscious to my self of many false Steps, for which the Lord knows I am *ashamed even to Confusion*, tho’ no Man can legally charge my Conversation) or were I as black as some have the most indefatigably endeavour’d to represent me, yet such Warmth as this is, proceeds more from *Ill-Will* to my Person, than from any Principle of Ha-

(a) Deut. xvii. 4.

‘ tred to Sin ; these rather seem to watch for
 ‘ my Failings, not with a Brotherly Compassion
 ‘ to spread a Vail over, but to expose in their
 ‘ highest Aggravation; these stick not to open the
 ‘ Wound to the utmost, but then the Oyl and Wine
 ‘ is wanting, they have no Design to heal, but to
 ‘ render it the more incurable.

‘ Am I faulty ? why then do they not as Chri-
 ‘ tians, endeavour my Recovery, in using all the
 ‘ Gentleness that the Case will admit of from a
 ‘ due Sense of common human Frailty ; *considering*
 ‘ *thy self, lest thou also be tempted*, saith the Apostle:
 ‘ What s there no Way left but *stripping off the*
 ‘ *Skin, or knocking out a Man’s Brains*, and making
 ‘ an End of him at once ? or is the Destruction
 ‘ of the whole Man the Way to restore the Soul ?
 ‘ Is this the Law of Christ ? The Word saith, *Thou*
 ‘ *shalt not hate thy Brother in thine Heart, thou shalt*
 ‘ *in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer Sin*
 ‘ *upon him (a)*. Tho’ to rebuke be a Duty, yet
 ‘ *Heart-Murder* is forbidden ; Rebuke must not be
 ‘ given in Hatred or Wrath, but in Love, and
 ‘ when ’tis lovingly tender’d, it ought to be as
 ‘ kindly entertain’d ; if there be a Dislocation,
 ‘ such a Case requires a tender Hand, as the Apo-
 ‘ stle saith, *If a Man be overtaken in a Fault, ye*
 ‘ *which are spiritual restore such a one in the Spirit*
 ‘ *of Meekness, (b)*, i. e. (as the Original hath it) *set*
 ‘ *him in joynt again* ; the Phrase is borrow’d from
 ‘ Chirurgeons, who having to do with a disloca-
 ‘ ted Joynt, will handle the same with very great
 ‘ Tendernefs. Now supposing me faulty, hath
 ‘ any skilful Hand done thus by me ? *No not any* ;
 ‘ but instead of setting me in Joynt again, they
 ‘ have rather *broken all my Bones*. Is this Religion ?
 ‘ Is this the Spirit of Christ, thus to drive me out

(a) Lev. xix. 17. (b) Gal. vi. 1.

' from the Inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go
 ' *serve other Gods* (a), and indeed had I not tasted
 ' *the Sweetness* ; and felt somewhat of *the Power of*
 ' *Religion*, I should (under their worse than Pa-
 ' *gan Usage*) have thought that there was no such
 ' Thing as true Religion in the World. Lord !
 ' what subtle Insinuations, what bitter Reflections,
 ' what Implacableness of Spirit have I found co-
 ' ver'd over with the *Mask of Religion* ! so that in
 ' my Hast I have been under the Temptation to
 ' say, all Men were Lyars, yet *nevertheless the*
 ' *Foundaion of God standeth sure, havinſt this Seal,*
 ' *the Lord knoweth them that are his.* However,
 ' give me Leave to say, that whatsoever my Mi-
 ' stakes have formely been, and which are per-
 ' haps as much magnify'd and misrepresented by
 ' the Artifice and Cunning of some designing
 ' Men, as most in the World ; and tho' when I
 ' speak to God, (*before whom no Flesh living shall*
 ' *be justify'd*) I must cover my Face and lye down
 ' ashamed and confounded under a sense of my
 ' own Vileness ; yet when I turn my self to these
 ' mine Enemies I am made able by the Grace
 ' of God to give them a *Universal Challenge* to
 ' bring in if they can any **LEGAL CHARGE** a-
 ' gainst my Life and Conversation.

' I shall not therefore further trouble my self
 ' about those Carnal Designs that are carried on
 ' by some with the greatest Pretence of Religion
 ' and Zeal for God's Glory, nor with the negle-
 ' cted Beam in the officious Eye of any who will
 ' not let the least *Mote in their Brother's* escape. It
 ' is now my Work to make the best Improvement
 ' of this *Dispensation* : I wou'd Eye the Providence
 ' of God ; these are but Instruments ; -there's a
 ' Divine Hand that sets all at Work. If mine

(a) 1 Sam. xxvi: 19.

' Enemies revile, perhaps the Lord hath bid them,
 ' and it may be, that God will look upon my
 ' Affliction, and requite me Good for all *their*
 ' *Evil*. These are the Rod of his Anger, which
 ' I not only hear but feel, and under which, by
 ' the Help of Divine Grace, I will lie down in
 ' the Dust, until God have Pity on me; I
 ' *will bear the Indignation of the Lord, because I have*
 ' *sinned against him, until he plead my Cause, and*
 ' *execute Judgment for me, he will bring me forth to*
 ' *the Light, and I shall behold his Righteousness (a).*
 ' I desire to look beyond Instruments, to the Just
 ' and Righteous Hand of my God. If he hath
 ' remov'd Mercies, 'tis what I have forfeited; if
 ' he hath laid on Affliction, 'tis what I have
 ' serv'd; the End and Design of all which, I
 ' trust, is the Advancement of his Grace in the
 ' Salvation of the chiefest of Sinners; and tho'
 ' mine Enemies, in the *Execution of God's Purpose*
 ' for mine Iniquities, have wrecked all their own
 ' Cruelty upon me, yet I trust he will over-rule
 ' their Malice for my Good, and that the Issue
 ' shall only be to *Purge and take away my Sin*.

' And yet, tho' this shall be the blessed Issue to
 ' all all the Objects of eternal Grace, yet doth it
 ' not excuse the Barbarities of a merciless Gene-
 ' ration, who always *help forward the Affliction*. If
 ' God be but a little displeas'd, (a) these add their
 ' Rage, and the Excesses of their Cruelty there-
 ' to, not contenting themselves within the Limits
 ' of his Revealed Will, tho' they can never go
 ' beyond his *secret Permission*, for God hath his
 ' Bridle in their Jaws. It is not therefore so
 ' much what they do, as with what cruel Mind,
 ' and to what destructive Ends they do it. *I was*
 ' *wroth with my People, I have polluted mine Inheri-*

(a) Micah vii. 9. (b) Zech. i. 15.

tance, and given them into thine Hand; thou didst
shew them no Mercy (a). Instead of compassionating
the Misery of God's People, they do exceedingly
aggravate it by their extream, hard and cruel
Usage; For they persecute him whom thou hast smit-
ten, and they talk to the Grief of those whom thou hast
wounded (b); every Fool hath a Bolt to shoot at the
Afflicted, and every Passenger will pull a Branch
from that Tree that's fell'd; but 'tis no small
Cruelty thus to compose Comedies out of such
deep Tragedies, and draw Blood from that Back
which is already made blue by the Hand of the
Almighty.

How well would it be for such to consider, that
Providence can soon turn the Scale, and they
themselves may be brought into the like Circum-
stances with my self; We don't know who shall
drink of this Cup next, and therefore, since we
are all equally embark'd on the same tempestuous
Sea of this World, steering our Course to the same
Haven of everlasting Rest, and have one common
Enemy, who by all the Varieties of Arts and
Stratagems, labours to sink us by a General Ship-
wreck, into the great Abyss of Perdition, how
careful should we be, not to aggravate the Dan-
ger of the Voyage, by fomenting such private Ani-
mosities, as may make us unmindful of the many
Rocks we have to pass? How ready to encourage
and support each each other, especially as we
advance nearer to the End of our Hopes? How
desirous to maintain such enobling Principles of
Love, Peace, and Harmony as shall be common
to all that reach that sweet Air of the upper Regions?
Surely nothing would more contribute to a settled
Tranquility in both Church and State, which the
Duty as well as the Interest of every Christian
obliges him to wish for.

(a) Isa. xlvii. 6. (c) Psal. lxix. 26.

The Publisher to the Reader.

IT cannot but be very acceptable to the sober Part of Mankind, to acquaint em, that *Edmond Curl* Bookseller is now under a severe Prosecution by the Reverend Mr. *William Clarke* a Dissenting Minister, near *Shadwell*, for publishing a flagrant, malicious and scandalous Libel against that Gentleman's Character. A Bill of Indictment has been found against the said *Curl*, at the *Old Bailey*; accordingly it was design'd he should have taken his Trial there last Sessions, Mr. *Clarke* attending the Court with his Witnesses, and having Fee'd a two Council for that Purpose; but the Cause not being call'd, it is deferr'd till next Sessions, when tis hop'd that Wretch (who hath given out that he never did any thing he had reason to be ashamed of) will receive his just Deserts.

As it has been his continu'd Practice for many Years to print defaming, scandalous and filthy Libels, particularly (of late) against the Honourable Commissioners of his Majesty's Customs, to be seen by his Recantation in the *Daily Courant*, Feb. 17. 1720. so he has rak'd up the scandalous Accounts of some Perjur'd Testators (an old Devilish Plot contriv'd by the High-Church Party in the late Reign, to bring the Dissenters into Contempt) which Mr. *Clarke* hath clearly confuted about 12 or 13 Years ago, and of which his Enemies, of late, have made no small Improvement upon the Account of his Bold Appearance in the Behalf of the Blessed Trinity.

As this Gentleman hath been barbarously abus'd in his Character, to his very great Detriment, he is resolv'd (being under an absolute Necessity) to prosecute the said *Curl* to the utmost Extent the Law will admit of, intending after the Trial at the *Old Bailey* is over, to bring a swingeing Action against the said *Curl* for the great Damages sustain'd by the said Libel. And 'tis not doubted but that when the Trial comes on, that Honourable Court will adjudge him as a common Nuisance to the Publick.

Lately Publish'd,

PLAIN DEALING: or a Friendly Reproof to the Reverend Mr. *William Bush* and Mr. *David Jennings*, both Dissenting Ministers near *Wapping*, for refusing to subscribe the Declaration for the ever Blessed Trinity: And also a Word of Advice to the Dissenting Congregations in and about the City of *London*. With the Black List of the rest of the Non Subscribing Ministers. Sold by *S. Popping*, in *Pater-noster-row*. Price 2d.

